



Jim Watson
Mayor / Maire

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March 1st, 2022

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

By e-mail

Re: Parliamentary Precinct Truck Convoy

On behalf of Ottawa City Council and the Ottawa Police Services Board, Chair Eli El-Chantiry and I are writing to formally thank the Government of Canada for declaring a Public Order Emergency under the federal *Emergencies Act* to assist with the restoration of public safety and security within the Parliamentary Precinct and the City of Ottawa. We believe that this temporary measure to ensure safety and security during this crisis was necessary and beneficial to address the exceptional circumstances that existed in our City and to facilitate a safe return of our city to our residents.

On Friday January 28, 2022, what was expected to be a short-lived and peaceful protest led by truckers opposed to vaccine mandates started to arrive in Ottawa. It soon became clear that the protest had expanded with broader objectives and had morphed into a more permanent occupation of the Parliamentary Precinct and the downtown core.

The isolation residents of Ottawa have felt for over 2 years due to the pandemic turned into anxiety and fear because of the actions of these occupiers. Many residents felt that their lives, health and safety were under serious threat. Businesses in centretown, the ByWard Market and Lowertown came to a standstill as residents and workers felt unsafe getting into the city core. The mental health and economic repercussions of the occupation were immediate, and the extent and cost of the impacts are still being tallied.

The municipal response to the occupation was severely constrained due to the unprecedented complexity, size and nature of the occupation. The Ottawa Police Service was unable to achieve the safe and effective containment and elimination of the occupiers, who were covert and well-funded, and which included elements that threatened both the public safety of our residents and businesses.

The City of Ottawa and the Province of Ontario declared a [State of Emergency](#) on February 6, 2022 and February 11, 2022 respectively, followed by the federal

government invoking the *Emergencies Act* on February 14, 2022 and the provincial government issuing an order under the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act*. This resulted in the federal and provincial governments making available significant additional policing resources as well as enhanced enforcement tools (including limitations on public assembly, designation of protected places), to provide the Ottawa Police Service with the levers it needed to end the unlawful occupation efficiently and effectively.

The Ottawa Police Service welcomed the significant co-operation between their members, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) and police services from across the province and country in restoring public order to our city.

In particular, we would like to recognize Deputy Commissioner Chris Harkins of the Ontario Provincial Police and Deputy Commissioner of Federal Policing Mike Duheme, of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police for their leadership and partnership with the highly capable Interim Chief of the Ottawa Police Service, Steve Bell.

The Ottawa Police Service, the RCMP and OPP, as well as numerous police agencies in Ontario and Quebec, were instrumental here in Ottawa. Working together they bolstered our resources, developed clear plans, and took the measured and effective action needed to resolve this occupation.

Specifically, the *Emergency Act* helped control public assembly, which by any measure was far beyond what could be considered a breach of the peace. This included the temporary limitation to travel to, from or within the downtown core.

It also included the designation of protected places, like the National War Memorial. It also enabled the use of RCMP to enforce municipal and provincial laws, and the imprisonment of, or imposition of fines on, people breaching these orders.

Although investigations continue and others may still be identified and charged, to date, 279 people have been arrested, 117 people have been charged and a total of 421 criminal charges have been laid so far.

By-law Officers also supported the Ottawa Police Service (OPS) as part of the Quick Response Teams. They issued a total of 3,546 tickets since January 28.

I want to thank all our policing partners, including the RCMP and OPP and jurisdictions from across the province and country, for their support in this operation. We are very proud of every member who has been involved in assisting our efforts to bring this protest to an end. We continue to be impressed by the professionalism of officers, some of whom were confronted with very difficult situations.

On behalf of the residents of Ottawa, I would like to thank you for helping us restore public order to our City and returning it to the residents and businesses that call it home.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jim Watson'.

Jim Watson
Mayor
City of Ottawa

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Eli El Chantiry'.

Councillor Eli El-Chantiry
Chair of the Ottawa Police Services Board
City of Ottawa

Cc. The Right Honourable Marco Mendicino, Minister of Public Safety